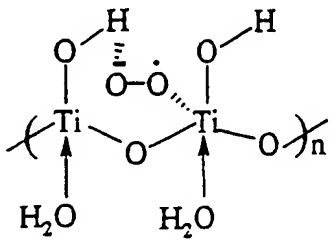
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the oxidation of phenols which comprises treating a solution of the phenol with an oxidant in the presence of Ti-superoxide heterogeneous catalyst of formula 1,



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n being in the range of 1-20, followed by subsequently treating the mixture of phenol solution and oxidant and catalyst with water at a temperature of about 100°C, and then terminating the reaction by bringing the reaction mixture to room temperature, extracting and purifying the product to obtain the oxidized phenol.

2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the strength of the oxidant H_2O_2 is in the range of 10-90%, preferably around 30-50%.

3. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the oxidant comprises 10-50 % of aq. H_2O_2.

4. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the oxidant comprises 30% of aq. H_2O_2.

5. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the phenol solution comprises a solution of phenol in a solvent selected from an organic solvent or water.

6. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of acetonitrile, acetone, methanol and acetic acid.

7. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the phenol is a substituted phenol.

8. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 7 wherein the substituent on the phenol is selected from the group consisting of H, Me, Cl, Br, I and t-Bu.

9. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the phenol is selected from the group consisting of phenol, o-cresol, m-cresol, 2,6-dimethylphenol, 2-butylphenol, 2,6-dibutylphenol, 4-chlorophenol, 4-bromophenol, 4-iodophenol and 2,4-dichlorophenol.

10. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the reaction of the phenol in solution with the oxidant is carried out at a temperature in the range of 50-80°C and for a time of 1-10 h.

11. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 10 wherein the temperature is in the range of 50-60°C and the time period is in the range of 1 to 3 hours.

12. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the phenol is converted at up to 100% and the catalyst shows a selectively of up to 99%.

13. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the catalyst is recycled to the reactor.